



Secretary of State Jason Kander
Election Review
September 7, 2016

Osage County – 2016 Primary Election

Background

During the 2016 primary election, the Osage County Local Election Authority (LEA) failed to provide the correct type of ballots at two of their polling places. This affected three precincts resulting in some voters being unable to cast a ballot for all of the races in the primary election. The Secretary of State's Office worked directly

with the LEA on Election Day to ensure the correct ballots were delivered to the two polling places and stayed in contact with the LEA throughout the day.

Results

The Missouri Secretary of State's office, upon notification of the problem, immediately contacted the LEA to confirm the issue and ensure that steps were taken to correct the issue.

The LEA confirmed the Freedom and Loose Creek polling places did not have the correct ballots delivered for a total of three precincts. Polling places may require a different number of ballots per ballot type for a precinct. On Election Day, once the LEA identified the problem, the correct ballots were delivered to the two polling places.

Under Missouri law, Section 115.115, RSMo., the local election authority designates the polling places for each precinct within which a voter is entitled

to vote. Missouri law, Section 115.247, RSMo., further states that each local election authority is required to provide all ballots for every election within its jurisdiction.

Clerical proofing errors occurred when the LEA was reviewing the ballot style matrix provided by the vendor. The matrix was not fully proofed and the LEA failed to identify mistakes in the ballot styles assigned to each polling place and precinct. The LEA has taken full responsibility for the clerical errors.

Because of these errors the incorrect ballots for three precincts were delivered to Freedom and Loose Creek polling places.

The proofing errors also led to requiring the LEA to provide further instructions to the election judges to ensure the correct ballots were provided to each voter. In addition, the ballots cast for the three precincts required hand tabulation on election night.

The LEA has confirmed that they are continuing to review and revise their internal process to ensure that they do not allow this to happen again.

At a minimum, the LEA should consider including in their internal procedures:

- necessary steps to ensure the appropriate number and type of ballots are ordered and delivered to each polling place;
- written process, including an employee checklist, to ensure that teams of at least two individuals review the entire matrix for the precinct ballots for each polling

place after every change to the matrix;

- a review by appropriate supervisors, including the LEA, to ensure that all the required steps were fully completed after every change to the matrix;
- training for every employee on the mandatory proofing procedures after every change to the matrix;
- call-in plan with each polling place at the beginning of Election Day to ensure the correct ballot style has been delivered to each polling place and to assess the level of ballots at the beginning and throughout the day;
- a written contingency plan for rapid distribution of ballots.